



Las Vegas Fire & Rescue Fire Prevention Division



INTERPRETATION NFPA 72

INTERPRETATION #: FA72-0001 (2015)	SUBJECT OF INTERPRETATION (INCL CODE SECTION): NFPA 72 – 2013 Ed, 10.3 EQUIPMENT		
APPROVED BY: <i>Ratita Nolas</i>	TITLE: <i>FIRE MARSHAL</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE: <i>9-23-15</i>	REVISION DATE:

APPLIES TO:

Fire prevention inspection staff, fire protection engineers and plan reviewers, fire protection system contractors, designers and installers.

PURPOSE:

Define a “like for like” fire alarm system replacement and clarify how a like for like replacement would affect the need to upgrade any detection devices and/or notification appliances of a fire alarm system.

DEFINITIONS:

Unless otherwise expressly stated, the following definitions shall, for the purposes of this interpretation, have the meanings as defined below.

IFC is the International Fire Code

Repair and replacement - To fix non-functioning system or to take corrective action to eliminate error and/or trouble conditions.

Emergency Replacement – When the fire alarm system is out of service due to a failure of a fire alarm control unit that cannot be repaired. (Fire watch is required for the time the system is out of service).

Required Replacement – When expansion of the existing fire alarm system is required due to tenant improvement, elevator upgrade, etc., and the existing fire alarm system is not capable of supporting the required expansion.

Voluntary Replacement – The replacement of an existing fire alarm control unit when the existing fire alarm system is still functioning as originally designed and installed (Not a required replacement).

FACU is defined as Fire Alarm Control Unit

INTERPRETATION:

Las Vegas Fire and Rescue, Fire Prevention Division has adopted the following interpretation based on field experience and generally accepted industry standards.

Like for Like replacement. Replacing a FACU, power supply, or remote extender panel with the same model number, manufactured by the same manufacturer. In the case of a model being discontinued, use the model identified as a replacement for the previous model by the same manufacturer (ex. Fire lite MMX-1 replaces Fire lite MMX). Where a replacement model is not available, then a suitable device can be selected from the FACU equipment manufacturer's compatibility list in the installation manual. This documentation must be provided by the installation contractor when applying for the permit.

"Like for like" replacement of individual components will be considered *"maintenance"* and thus will not be subject to currently adopted requirements. The existing system will be subject to the codes and standards that it was installed under, except for any *"existing building"* requirements in the currently adopted codes and/or standards.

Note: A construction permit is required for the installation of any fire alarm panel, either through maintenance or through new installation.

RATIONALE:

Section 3.3.150 defines *"Maintenance"* as "work, including, but not limited to repair, replacement, and service, performed to ensure that equipment works properly."

Section 1.4.1 states that it is not intended that the provisions of the 2013 edition be applied to facilities, equipment, structures, or installations that were existing or approved for construction or installation prior to the effective date of the document.

Existing fire alarm control units that are failing and cannot be repaired, due to obsolescence, catastrophic failure, limited capacity, etc., must be replaced immediately in order to provide the building with a functional fire alarm system.

Where a required fire alarm system is out of service, a fire watch shall be required in accordance with IFC Section 901.7. Fire watch personnel and procedures shall be approved by the Fire Marshal, and shall be in accordance with the aforementioned section.

Existing fire alarm systems which do not meet current building and fire codes, and are functioning as originally designed and installed, are not required to be upgraded to meet current codes. However, if these systems are out of service due to a fire alarm control unit failure, and the new fire alarm control unit is not listed to be compatible with the existing devices, the existing fire alarm system no longer functions as originally designed and installed, a complete code compliant fire alarm system meeting the currently adopted installation standard shall be installed.